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Editorial: Pence says no to refugees

After the deadly attacks on Paris claimed by the Islamic State earlier this month, 31 of the nation's 50 governors stated they would not take refugees from Syria. Sadly for us, Gov. Mike Pence was one of them.

Simultaneously, France showed these governors what real courage in the face of barbarism looks like, as it declared it would be taking 30,000 more refugees than it had previously stated.

For taking this action, Pence was sued then in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana Monday by the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana. The ACLU claims he is violating the Civil Rights Act and the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause by accepting refugees from other countries and not Syria.

Pence's action is not only small-minded but almost completely without actual meaning. Governors can't bar refugees from settling in their borders; they can only ask the State Department not to send them there.

Someone should ask former Gov. Mitch Daniels what he thinks of Pence's decision. Daniels has been quiet on this front thus far, but he too is the product of a Syrian refugee. As The Indianapolis Star's Chelsea Schneider

pointed out Nov. 21, Daniels' grandfather, Elias Esau Daniels, came to America from Syria in 1905.

In some ways, this feels like a repeat of RFRA. Once again, the governor is jumping into national politics by taking a stand against a minority population. Pence seems determined to solidify our state's reputation as unwelcoming bigots, earned by the RFRA debacle.

The governor takes his responsibility for safety seriously. We're not questioning that. But the appearance of politics as usual is so blatant in this case.

Americans are apprehensive, but this is when we need leaders to reassure us and point out America's long-held policy of bringing in refugees.